

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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C O N F I D E N T I A L JERUSALEM 1521

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS 1 AND 2
TAGS: PORG, PBOR, MARR, UNSC, IS, LE, XF
SUBJECT: CONTINUING PALESTINIAN INFILTRATION

1. UN SOURCE HAS GIVEN US COPY OF ERSKINE'S REPORT DATED
MAY 30 ON RECENT ACTIVITIES BY PALESTINIANS IN UNIFIL AREA,
MOST PARTICULARLY SEVERAL INFILTRATION INCIDENTS MAY 29-30.
REPORT ILLUSTRATES SKEPTICISM WHICH
UNIFIL OFFICERS HAVE REGARDING WILL OR ABILITY OF PALESTIN-
IANS TO ABIDE BY COMMITMENTS MADE TO UN. FOLLOWING ARE PERT-
INENT EXCERPTS:

2. BEGIN QUOTE: "YESTERDAY MORNING A FRENCH RECONNAISSANCE
PATROL ENTERING A NEW AREA OF RECONNAISSANCE
WAS STOPPED BY A GROUP OF ARMED PERSONNEL VIC AMR 1805-2936
(WEST OF JWAYYA) AND WERE TOLD THAT THE PATROL COULD
NOT PROCEED AS THE ROAD WAS MINED AND THAT THEY COULD NOT
ENTER THE ARMED PERSONNEL BASE. THE PATROL WAS WITHDRAWN
AND A LOOSE CORDON WAS ESTABLISHED BY MID AFTERNOON AND IS
CONTINUING.
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3. "THE FRENCHBATT COMMANDER AND UNIFIL CHIEF OPERATIONS
OFFICER MET WITH LEADER OF THE GROUP. THE GROUP CLAIMED
TO HAVE BEEN IN VICINITY OF THIS BASE SINCE 1972. THE
GROUP WAS WELL DISCIPLINED, WELL ARMED, WELL INFORMED AND WITH
MORE THAN ADEQUATE SIGNAL EQUIPMENT. THE GROUP STATED THAT
THEY WOULD NOT LEAVE THE AREA.

4. "IN ORDER TO MORE FULLY DEVELOP THE SITUATION THE FRENCHBATT WAS INSTRUCTED TO CONDUCT ADDITIONAL RECONNAISSANCE TODAY.

5. "TODAY'S RECONNAISSANCE REVEALED THAT THE GROUP FOUND YESTERDAY HAD REMAINED IN PLACE. THIS GROUP NUMBERS APPROXIMATELY 20 PLUS. A MEETING LATER IN THE MORNING BETWEEN THE LEADER AND UNIFIL COO WAS CORDIAL BUT THE LEADER STATED THAT THEY WOULD NOT LEAVE THE AREA. FURTHER RECONNAISSANCE LOCATED ANOTHER GROUP OF ARMED PERSONNEL VIC AMR 1798-2903 (EAST OF QANA) WHO WERE ALSO WELL ARMED, WELL DISCIPLINED AND WITH MORE THAN ADEQUATE SIGNAL EQUIPMENT. THIS GROUP NUMBERS APPROXIMATELY 30 PLUS.

6. "A MEETING WAS ARRANGED ON THE SPOT IN WHICH UNIFIL COO, FOUR ARMED ELEMENTS CAPTAINS AND OTHERS PARTICIPATED. THE LEADER OF THE GROUP OF ARMED ELEMENTS SAYS THAT THE OVER-ALL CONTROL OF THEIR ELEMENT WAS NAEF HAWETMAH (PDFLP) WHO IS LOCATED IN BEIRUT. THE LEADER STATES THAT THE GROUP IS UNDER THE COMMAND OF FATAH.

7. "A BRIEF STORY OF THEIR STATEMENTS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

(A) THAT THEY HAVE BEEN IN THIS AREA SINCE 1968.

(B) THAT THEY WILL REMAIN IN PLACE AND NOT BE MOVED.
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(C) THAT THEIR GROUP INCLUDED BOTH LEBANESE AND PALESTINIANS.

(D) THAT THEY WILL ADVANCE ON ISRAEL AFTER 13 JUNE WITHDRAWAL.

(E) THAT THEY MAY NOT FIGHT FROM LEBANON, MAYBE FROM THE SEA, GOLAN OR SINAI.

(F) THAT THEY BRING IN THEIR FOOD EACH DAY THROUGH UN CHECKPOINTS UTILIZING CIVILIAN CLOTHES AND CIVILIAN CARS.

(G) THAT THEIR LEADERS BE GIVEN UN PASSES FOR FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT.

(H) THAT THEY WILL NOT OPEN FIRE AT UN TROOPS AND THAT THEIR ENEMY IS ISRAEL.

(I) THAT THE UN SHOULD STOP OBSERVING THE ARMED ELEMENTS WITH BINOCULARS.

(J) THAT IF WE WOULD SPEND FIVE MINUTES TALKING TO EACH ARMED ELEMENT THAT IT WOULD TAKE TWO MONTHS TO

COMPLETE.

(K) THAT THE LEADERS OF THE ARMED ELEMENTS AND THE LEADERS OF THE UN HAVE AGREED THAT THE ARMED ELEMENTS WOULD NOT CARRY WEAPONS ON ROADS OR IN TOWNS AND THAT THE UN SOLDIERS WOULD NOT MAKE RECONNAISSANCE AND ENTER THE ARMED PERSONNEL'S POSITIONS.

8. "WE NOW ESTIMATE THAT THERE MAY BE ARMED ELEMENTS OF ONE COMPANY OF APPROXIMATELY 80 TO 100 PERSONNEL LOCATED IN A RECTANGULAR AREA BORDERED BY MARAKAH AMR 179-297, BARISH AMR 183-297, QANA AMR 178-290 AND GRID SQUARE AMR 183-289.

9. "THE SITUATION THAT WE ARE NOW FACING, INVOLVING, QUITE CONFIDENTIAL

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POSSIBLY A GROUP OF 80 TO 100 ARMED PERSONNEL, APPEARS TO STEM AT LEAST IN PART FROM THE POLICY OF COMPLETE FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT FOR THOSE IN CIVILIAN CLOTHES IN THE UNIFIL AREA. IT APPEARS IMPOSSIBLE THAT ALL, OR EVEN THE MAJORITY OF THESE ARMED PERSONNEL LIVED ON OR NEAR THIS TYPE OF BASE DURING THE IDF OCCUPATION. IN ONE PART OF THE AREA INVOLVED THE ENGINEER COMPANY HAD EARLIER BLOWN UP FIVE AMMUNITION CACHES (1 AND 2 MAY) WHILE NOT SEEING ANY ARMED PERSONNEL AT THAT TIME. THIS FACT WOULD APPEAR TO CONFIRM THAT THE ARMED PERSONNEL NOW PRESENT HAVE ENTERED UNIFIL'S AREA SINCE THE INSTITUTION OF THE FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT POLICY."

10. "THE SITUATION IS NOW AGGRAVATED SINCE RESUPPLY OF FOOD AND WATER IS ALLOWED. IT IS NOW EASY TO LIVE AND STAY IN THE AREA IN QUESTION.

11. "IT SEEMS LIKELY THAT AS WE EXTEND THE AREA OF RECONNAISSANCE PATROLS TO NEW AREAS OFF THE MAIN ROADS THAT FURTHER SUCH GROUPS OF ARMED PERSONNEL WILL BE DISCOVERED. IN THIS CONNECTION IT IS REITERATED THAT ONE OF THE ARMED GROUP'S OFFICER SPOKE TO THIS MORNING HIMSELF STATED THAT AFTER IDF WITHDRAWAL ON 13 JUNE UNIFIL WILL DISCOVER SIMILAR GROUPS OF ARMED PERSONNEL REPRESENTING THE PALESTINIAN REVOLUTION IN THE SOUTH OF THE AREA.

12. "UNIFIL SPOKESMAN, WHO WAS PRESENT AT DISCUSSION WITH ARMED GROUP TODAY, BEING ON A TOUR OF THE AREA, AND WHO HAS ASSISTED IN DRAFTING THIS CABLE, ADDS HE IS ATTEMPTING NEWS BLACKOUT FOR PRESENT AND HAS INSTRUCTED UNIFIL BATTALION PRESS OFFICER CONCERNED TO SAY NOTHING WITHOUT SPECIFIC CLEARANCE UNIFIL HQ." END QUOTE.
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13. UNNY HAS TOLD UNIFIL THAT IT WILL RAISE MATTER
WITH PLO REP BUT CAUTIONED UNIFIL TO AVOID HASTY JUDGMENT
AS TO WHY ARMED GROUP IS PRESENT. (OUR SOURCE HAS JUST
INFORMED US THAT ARAFAT AHS ASKED TO SEE ERSKINE
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE--HOPEFULLY JUNE 2 IN BEIRUT).
COMMENT: DESPITE GUYER'S IMPLICATION THAT UNIFIL
APPROVED RECENT DECISION TO SUPPLY PALESTINIANS
(USUN 2157), IT IS CLEAR THAT UNIFIL OFFICERS CONSIDER
RESUPPLY POLICY (AS FEARED) IS FACILITATING INFILTRATION.
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